

Castle Pinckney  
Charleston  
Charleston County  
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-195

HABS  
SC  
10-CHAR.V  
4

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORIC AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of South Carolina

Historic American Buildings Survey

Prepared at Washington Office

4782  
S.C.  
10-CHAP. 4

Castle Pinckney  
Charleston Vicinity  
Charleston County  
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Location: Castle Pinckney is located a little less than one mile from the East front of the City.

The following excerpt was taken from the "Year Book of the City of Charleston", 1883. Contributed by Mr. Samuel Lapham, Jr., Charleston, South Carolina, 1934, and prepared in this form by the Washington Office, Division of Design and Construction, May 1961.

1794. The site of this work was selected in 1794, on a shoal known as Schultes' Folly Island, by Paul Hyacinthe Perrault, under orders from the Secretary of War, April 11th of that year, in pursuance of the directions of President Washington to fortify the port and harbor of Charleston, and to act under the orders of the Governor of South Carolina. The work, however, being on a scale supposed too extensive for the funds appropriated, was not attempted until 1797; between this time and 1804 a work was erected on this site, the character of which, however, is unknown.

1806. On February 18th of this year, it was reported that the severe gale of 1804 had left this work a ruin, and in April the following year Lieut. Col. Williams reported that the fort could not be effectually repaired, without taking it down to the foundation, and sawing off the remnants of the heads of piles at low water-mark.

1809. On January 6th a new masonry work was reported by the Secretary of War as commenced, and in a rapid state of progress, and two years afterwards it is described as follows: "This new work of an elliptical form, built of brick, has two tiers of guns, of which thirty are mounted - eight in casemates and remainder en barbette; a good magazine and quarters for two hundred men and officers." The work at that date was considered the most important in the harbor. A plan of the fort, showing the height to which it was built in 1810 is presented herewith in the sketch marked F. Up to 1829 nothing further was done except to make minor repairs and to protect the foundations by depositing around it a quantity of large stones.

1829. In April of this year Lieut. Brewerton recommended the construction of a sea wall, to strengthen the foundations, and this was completed in 1832. In the following year additions were made by Capt, Eliason for the temporary defence of the gorge, by pallisades, etc.

1860. At the close of this year its armament consisted of fourteen 24<sup>c</sup>, four 42<sup>c</sup>, four 8-inch sea coast howitzers, one 10-inch and one 8-inch mortar, and four light pieces for flank defence. On the 27th December, 1860, a detachment of the First Regiment Rifles, South Carolina Militia, consisting of the Washington Light Infantry,

Capt. B. G. Pinckney, and the Meagher Guard, Capt, Ed. McCrady, Jr., under the command of Col. J. J. Petigrew and Major Ellison Capers, proceeded at half-past four o'clock in the afternoon to Railroad Accommodation wharf, where the battalion embarked on the steamer Nina; landing at Castle Pinckney, the command scaled the walls with ladders and took possession of the fort, which was occupied at the time by a working party under Lieut. Meade, United States Army. While garrisoned by the Zouave Cadets, Capt. C. E. Chichester (1861), a number of prisoners from the battle of first Manassas were confined here, among whom was Col. Corcoran of the New York Sixty-Ninth Regiment. Later in the year Castle Pinckney was prepared for an armament, guns were mounted, etc. The garrison continued unchanged until March, 1862. The Confederates while in possession changed its character somewhat, by an embankment of earth against the scarf of the sea front, thus elosing the casemate embrasures and converting it into a barbette battery, with empaulements for four guns - three 10-inch columbiads and one Brook's rifle on centre-pintle carriage, and this was its armament when evacuated in February, 1865, and maintained at the present time.

Suggested Reference: Rogers W. Young, "Castle Pinckney, Silent Sentinel of Charleston Harbor," The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine, Vol.XXXIX, No. 1, January 1938, pp. 1-14; Vol.XXXIX, No. 2, April 1938, pp. 51-67.

Prepared by: Worth Bailey, HABS Historian, May, 1961

Approved by

Charles H. Lessig  
Acting Chief Architect

Date 6/6/61

ADDENDUM TO:  
CASTLE PINCKNEY  
Charleston Harbor  
Charleston vicinity  
Charleston County  
South Carolina

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PHOTOGRAPHS

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

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